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Title: Regarding outbreak of bird flu in West Bengal and other parts of the country.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (PURI): Sir, a fresh outbreak of bird flue, with highly pathogenic H5N1 strains of avion influenza virus, has resurfaced in West Bengal and some other parts of the country. The samples were sent on March 6 to Bhopal Laboratory and they were tested positive.

Sir, this has created panic among the poultry farmers, including the tribals. In the first phase of its occurrence, lakhs of birds have been killed in West Bengal

* Not recorded

and other neighbouring States of Orissa, Assam, Bihar and Jharkhand as a preventive measure. By the order of the Government of India, State Government, have culled over 3.9 million chickens and ducks in the last month. The poultry farmers, including the tribal populace of these areas have sustained heavy financial losses and some of them have been ruined.

Sir, you know that these chickens and ducks are like one of the family members of these tribals. Even in some of the bordering parts of West Bengal, Orissa and Jharkhand, there was not any detection of this virus. But for preventive measures, the Government of India directed to kill all the chickens of these areas and there is absolutely no compensation paid to these people. The tribal people have their only income through poultry farming. But the Government of India has not made any provision for the compensation of these poultry farmers and tribals. The Government of India has directed that they should manage with funds provided to states as assistance to States to control animal disease.

Sir, this is a general order and for any animal disease, funds are provided to States as Central assistance. But this particular case has come accendentlly and lot of compensation is required. So, I urge upon the Government of India to make such provision for compensation to the poultry farmers and tribals so that they can revive their farming and live in a proper way.

Sir, the World Health Organisation has labeled it as one of the worst epidemics of the world. The UN Food and Agriculture has warned that the inter-State surveillance should continue because there is also the possibility of human infection. So, I urge upon the Government to take proper care and to provide assistance to them.